

## Donna Valade

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**From:** Mary Fisher  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 10, 2021 1:58 PM  
**To:** Donna Valade  
**Subject:** FW: West Glacier Vision Plan

**From:** Sally Thompson <sallykthompson@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 10, 2021 1:55 PM  
**To:** Planning.Zoning <Planning.Zoning@flathead.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** West Glacier Vision Plan

I would like to recommend that you adopt the above mentioned plan. It is a guideline for the future.

One very serious traffic problem that is not specifically addressed is the lack of egress from the West Glacier RV park. This new addition to our area has helped create the terrible bottleneck of traffic that is now the norm. Unfathomable to me that one could build a 200+ RV site and have the entrance and exit be the same small two lane road into and out of. It is a serious safety issue and one that I feels needs to be addressed.

Thank you.

Sally Thompson

## Donna Valade

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**From:** Mary Fisher  
**Sent:** Monday, August 9, 2021 11:40 AM  
**To:** Donna Valade  
**Subject:** FW: West Glacier Vision Plan

**From:** Larry Williams <lbwillia69@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 9, 2021 11:31 AM  
**To:** Planning.Zoning <Planning.Zoning@flathead.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** West Glacier Vision Plan

As longtime former residents of West Glacier, we enthusiastically support the West Glacier Vision Plan and urge its adoption by the Flathead County Planning Board. Though we currently live in Columbia Falls, we maintain close connections with West Glacier friends, and we applaud their dedication to the values that made/make the community so distinctive. They are striving to maintain the special character of one of the main thresholds to the world-class treasure that is Glacier National Park, a goal worthy of widespread approval by Glacier's far-flung greater community.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on this highly-significant issue.

Respectfully submitted,

Larry and Becky Williams  
PO Box 3097  
Columbia Falls, MT 59912  
[lbwillia69@hotmail.com](mailto:lbwillia69@hotmail.com)

## Donna Valade

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**From:** Mary Fisher  
**Sent:** Monday, August 9, 2021 4:53 PM  
**To:** Donna Valade  
**Subject:** FW: Comment for the Flathead County Planning and Zoning Meeting on Aug 11: Letter of Support from Glacier National Park  
**Attachments:** West Glacier Vision Plan Letter of Support From Glacier National Park.pdf

**From:** Tomlin, Teagan L <Teagan\_Tomlin@nps.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 9, 2021 4:52 PM  
**To:** Planning.Zoning <Planning.Zoning@flathead.mt.gov>  
**Cc:** Riddle, Mary R <Mary\_Riddle@nps.gov>; Webster, Pete <Pete\_Webster@nps.gov>  
**Subject:** Comment for the Flathead County Planning and Zoning Meeting on Aug 11: Letter of Support from Glacier National Park

Dear Flathead County Planning Board,

Please find the attached letter of support for the West Glacier Vision Plan from Glacier National Park's Acting Superintendent Pete Webster.

This letter is for the next **Flathead County Planning & Zoning meeting on Aug 11<sup>th</sup>**, when the Planning Board will consider moving **forward on adopting the West Glacier Vision Plan amendment to the Canyon Plan** as presented by the Middle Canyon Land Use Committee at the June meeting.

Teagan Tomlin  
Executive Assistant  
Office of the Superintendent  
Glacier National Park  
P.O. Box 1  
West Glacier, MT 59936  
406-888-7901 Phone  
406-888-7904 Fax



## United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
P.O. Box 128  
Glacier National Park  
West Glacier, Montana 59936



1.A.1.Perm

August 9, 2021

Flathead County Planning Board  
40 11th Street West, Suite 220  
Kalispell, MT 59901

Dear Flathead County Planning Board:

Glacier National Park would like to voice its support for adding the *West Glacier Vision Plan* as an addendum to the *Canyon Plan*. This collaborative community effort has resulted in a positive and visionary document around which not only the residential and economic community of West Glacier, but Flathead County can use to guide current issues and future opportunities while maintaining shared community values.

As you are well aware, West Glacier is the community on the doorstep of Glacier National Park and while all communities in the Flathead Valley are facing pressures and impacts from increasing visitation to the area; West Glacier is the funnel to the park's most used entrance. Sixty percent of the park's over 3 million visitors come through West Glacier. This village also serves as the primary park egress route in the event of an emergency like wildfire or a train derailment.

The West Glacier community has shown remarkable ability and vision to develop a plan that identifies shared community character elements that articulate goals identified collaboratively by the members of the local community, businesses, and the greater Flathead Valley. The plan describes the principles that support the articulated goals and the actions and strategies the community may pursue to set priorities and reach those goals.

This plan offers guidance on how to protect the character of the hub of the West Glacier community while adjusting to increased visitation at Glacier National Park and the entire region. Glacier National Park is excited about the collaborative effort that developed this plan, the vision that has been described and will be looking for more opportunities to engage, learn from and assist the West Glacier community as it moves towards the future.

I encourage you to add this Vision Plan as an addendum to the *Canyon Plan*. Thank you for your review and consideration.

Sincerely,

Pete Webster  
Acting Superintendent

Cc: Mary Riddle



## Donna Valade

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**From:** Mary Fisher  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 10, 2021 7:36 AM  
**To:** Donna Valade  
**Subject:** FW: Sharon Bengtson West Glacier

**From:** Tom Bengtson <t.s.bengtson@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, August 9, 2021 8:01 PM  
**To:** Planning.Zoning <Planning.Zoning@flathead.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Sharon Bengtson West Glacier

Dear Planning Board,

First I want to thank you for the job you are doing.

I request you adopt the West Glacier Vision Plan amendment to the Canyon Plan.

I have been somewhat involved but mostly observing the process of this Vision Plan. In the 90's I was very involved with the original Canyon Plan process.

Please, as one who has lived in West Glacier since 1976 and observed the changes I believe this plan is important, and the time is now.

It is important to me, and to the other residents of West Glacier, Flathead Valley residents, visitors, businesses and property owners.

It is important because it provides a template and guide to address the changes that are coming to this area while considering the community character and the unique natural corridor it lies in. (Glacier National Park / Flathead National Forest / Great Bear Wilderness / Middle Fork of the Flathead River / BNSF / and State Highway 2).

They have taken time to be sure the plan provides direction on the topics of development, policies, programs, natural environment and services to be planned to insure a resilient future for West Glacier.

Because West Glacier is not an incorporated town, but is a host to 'million of visitors,' we need you to approve the West Glacier Vision Plan.

Thank you

Sharon Bengtson  
P O Box 386  
West Glacier MT 59936

## Donna Valade

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**From:** Mary Fisher  
**Sent:** Monday, August 9, 2021 7:27 AM  
**To:** Donna Valade  
**Subject:** FW: Adopt the WG Vision Plan amendment to the Canyon Plan

**From:** Terry Divoky <coatimundi3@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 8, 2021 6:46 PM  
**To:** Planning.Zoning <Planning.Zoning@flathead.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** Adopt the WG Vision Plan amendment to the Canyon Plan

Dear Flathead County Planning Board,

Please consider **adopting the West Glacier Vision Plan amendment to the Canyon Plan**. I was able to attend many of these meetings and feel the West Glacier Vision Plan amendment will help update the Canyon Plan and help CALURS make solid, community driven, decisions into the future.

Thank you,

Terry Divoky  
[coatimundi3@gmail.com](mailto:coatimundi3@gmail.com)  
PO Box 306  
west Glacier, MT 59936  
406-40704880





Flathead County Planning Board  
c/o Mary Fisher  
1035 1<sup>st</sup> Ave West  
Kalispell MT 59901  
Transmitted via email to: [mfisher@flathead.mt.gov](mailto:mfisher@flathead.mt.gov)

August 4, 2021

To Flathead County Planning Board Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed addendum of the West Glacier Vision Plan (WGVP) to the Canyon Area Land Use Regulatory System (Canyon Plan). The National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA) has long been involved with land use issues around Glacier National Park and is a founding member of the group writing the WGVP. On behalf of our 1.6 million members and supporters nationwide, we are happy to support the inclusion of the WGVP as an addendum to the Canyon Plan.

The purpose of the project was to involve all members of the community -- both full- and part-time residents, Flathead County, Glacier National Park, local businesses, and other interested parties. By engaging all stakeholders, the project identified what our shared values were and built a vision to fit those values, without adding an additional level of regulatory burden. That the WGVP is visionary and not regulatory is important to note; and helped to build support for the project.

**Community Vision Statement:**

*West Glacier envisions their community as a place where recreation, healthy lifestyles and sustainable development converge to provide a high quality of life, while retaining unique historic character, habitat and abundant natural scenic beauty.*

The future actions needed to implement the WGVP, and to meet the communities vision statement, will be completely voluntary and community driven. This will not only strengthen the community character of the area, but also help establish and maintain lines of communication between residents and agencies and continue the long tradition of finding compromise to meet the challenges of the day.

The beauty of the WGVP builds on the 'spirit of place' in the Canyon Plan, helping modernize solutions to old issues and addressing new ones, but without additional regulation.

Excerpt from the Executive Summary 2/16/21

As a community-driven plan, the WGVP has been developed to support focused collaborative work to preserve common core values of the community into the future. The intent of the Vision Plan is to focus planning efforts and policies to address current issues and future opportunities. It is a guiding document that aids in making decisions on land use, redevelopment, public services, facilities, infrastructure, environment and community communications. The project is a voluntary design dependent on the collective, shared values of West Glacier residents and stakeholders. To achieve these goals will require that working groups organize around areas of interest in the action items identified in the plan.

NPCA supports the WGVP becoming incorporated into the Canyon Plan. We look to our volunteer leaders to adopt this addendum which will update and modernize the existing document in an efficient and non-regulatory way.

Please feel free to contact me with questions or for clarification.

Sincerely,



Sarah Lundstrum  
Glacier Program Manager, National Parks Conservation Association  
Whitefish MT





## Donna Valade

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**From:** Mary Fisher  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 4, 2021 1:05 PM  
**To:** Donna Valade  
**Subject:** FW: West Glacier Vision Plan (WGVP) Information for Letters of Support to the Planning Board

**From:** Mary T. McClelland <marytreemcclelland@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 4, 2021 12:52 PM  
**To:** RTCA-WG Visioning Project - Planning Partners <marytreemcclelland@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** RE: West Glacier Vision Plan (WGVP) Information for Letters of Support to the Planning Board

Planning team,  
My apologies for this being such a fast turnaround – but it's important to get this information out to the community before the 11<sup>th</sup> and I will be gone for a week.

I'm going to send it via email to all our focus groups and community member email lists this afternoon.

There is nothing new in the text as it is all taken from our draft and previous emails.

If you see anything that jumps out as an error or object to any part can you let me know asap.

Thanks so much!! Trying to get ready to be gone for a week and the 10<sup>th</sup> will be too late to send this out given the Planning Board Meeting is on the 11<sup>th</sup>.

Many thanks for any response now or before the 11<sup>th</sup>!

Sincerely,  
Mary T.

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The email will read:

RE: West Glacier Vision Plan (WGVP) Information for Letters of Support to the Planning Board

**Greetings to friends, neighbors, stakeholders and working groups,**

At the next **Flathead County Planning & Zoning meeting on Aug 11<sup>th</sup>**, the Planning Board will consider moving **forward on adopting the West Glacier Vision Plan amendment to the Canyon Plan** as presented by the Middle Canyon Land Use Committee at the June meeting.

Please feel free to use this information in a comment at the meeting in person, or on zoom, or in an email. Letters of support are encouraged and welcome!

- Comments may be submitted by via email to [planning.zoning@flathead.mt.gov](mailto:planning.zoning@flathead.mt.gov)
- The Flathead County Planning Board will meet beginning at 6:00 P.M. in the 2nd floor conference room of the South Campus Building 40 11th Street West, Suite 200, Kalispell, MT 59901.

- As always the public is encouraged and welcome to attend. *There is also an option to join the meeting via Zoom. See the attached Agenda for that information*
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An email to the Planning & Zoning Office will help make these collaborative efforts a reality and bring the Canyon Plan up to date and into the future. The directions to do any of these methods of support are below as well as information you should feel free to incorporate.

What is most important to you?

### **References**

- The Flathead County Planning & Zoning Office Addendum to the Canyon Plan – West Glacier Vision Plan - Growth Policy Amendment Staff Report :  
[https://flathead.mt.gov/planning\\_zoning/documents/FPMA-21-01\\_Staffreport.pdf](https://flathead.mt.gov/planning_zoning/documents/FPMA-21-01_Staffreport.pdf)
- West Glacier Vision Plan DRAFT  
[https://flathead.mt.gov/planning\\_zoning/documents/5.18.2021WGVPVisionPlanDraft.pdf](https://flathead.mt.gov/planning_zoning/documents/5.18.2021WGVPVisionPlanDraft.pdf)
- West Glacier Action Plan DRAFT  
[https://flathead.mt.gov/planning\\_zoning/documents/2020.2.1WGVPActionPlan2.pdf](https://flathead.mt.gov/planning_zoning/documents/2020.2.1WGVPActionPlan2.pdf)  
(the Action Plan is a Working Group document that is 'live' and updated according to what the community and stakeholder working groups, along with the County, determine what is priority

### **Articles**

- Flathead Beacon: <https://flatheadbeacon.com/2021/03/04/as-visitation-spikes-west-glacier-frames-forward-thinking-vision-plan/>
  - Daily Interlake: <https://dailyinterlake.com/news/2021/mar/04/groups-release-plan-tackling-west-glacier-growing-/>
  - Hungry Horse News: <https://hungryhorsenews.com/news/2021/mar/03/west-glacier-vision-plan-released-public-view/>
  - The challenge in National Park Gateway towns - <https://www.npr.org/2021/07/31/1022227257/national-park-gateway-towns-tourism-crowded-pandemic>
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### **WGVP Highlights**

- The West Glacier Vision Plan was developed through a dynamic, community-driven process with participation from business, resident and property-owner stakeholders to address the pressures of increasing tourism while imagining how to maintain the unique, historic and iconic character of West Glacier. The process encouraged open dialogue about West Glacier, and its meaning to local residents and other communities of Flathead County – updating the Canyon Plan as an addendum, taking CALURS from present day and into the future.
- In the process, five shared goals were identified:
  1. Preserve Community Character and Sense of Place
  2. Create a Safe and Resilient Community
  3. Enhance Community Communications and Participation
  4. Support Sustainable Outdoor Recreation Opportunities
  5. Provide Seamless Transportation Connections
- The plan is intended to be both practical and visionary; address current issues and future opportunities. It has helped identify shared community character elements, where to address focus to increase visitor and community awareness and stewardship. The plan articulates the goals identified by the community, describes the principles that support them and the actions and strategies the community may pursue to set priorities and reach those goals. The WGVP and the

Action Worksheet can still be viewed on the County website or feel free to contact any of the Planning Team members below.

- The Canyon plan originated three decades ago and has been an effective guideline for the doorstep of GNP but no one could have predicted or anticipated the overwhelming number of visitors and the effects it would have on the community – in this finite space – affecting roads, housing, congestion, health and safety of residents and the town environment. The West Glacier community is rich in the sensitive natural amenities surrounding it and the WGVP idea came out of imagining a future for the community.
  - The plan is meant to seek opportunities in the changes that will continue to happen, anticipate future development, foster regenerative approaches to change and embrace those opportunities while keeping the unique qualities in place.
  - There is a great sense of community responsibility in West Glacier because of its proximity to the Park. Residents realize they are not the only ones who care about preserving that sense of place, the greater community, the businesses the visitors and surrounding stakeholders all benefit from taking care of West Glacier– it is a value shared by communities ‘down the line’ and into the Flathead Valley and throughout the state of Montana to preserve this place into the future. WGVP p.15
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The West Glacier Vision Plan updates and modernizes the canyon plan goals while strengthening its purpose by:

- Confirming the values identified in the canyon plan are still shared values today
  - Adding new issues brought by increased visitation to Glacier – which dramatically impacts the WG area.
  - Bringing focus and working groups together across the broad spectrum of stakeholders to improve communications, safety and opportunity through community driven actions
  - Opening doors to funding and collaborating on projects with other communities
  - Focusing on stewardship ensuring a future for those who make their living here, those who make their homes here, and for those who come to visit.
  - 5 shared goals in the form of value statements, supported by principles and strategies to achieve the goals, without providing the detail. The detail is provided by the working groups of volunteer community members who are interested in addressing issues priority –
  - From broad spectrum of disparate stakeholders; action plan is community driven
  - It is not regulatory
  - It will not cost the County any money (no budgetary or regulatory elements in the plan)
  - This is a way to protect the character of the hub of the WG community
  - Community driven
  - WGVP has inspired and fostered collaboration
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Through the action plan working groups that are already forming around issues of importance in the West Glacier area – around every one of the five shared goals that were established in the focus group sessions early in the Vision process. New community participants, part and full time residents and businesses working together.

For example:

- 1) Goal: Character and sense of place
  - a. Helping develop and Short Term Rental Guide (initiated by Short Term Renters and their neighbors) to increase awareness on wildlife, garbage, weeds, noise, light, occupancy limits, parking, guest manuals



- b. West Glacier Historical Gateway – Underpass project required determination and a demonstration of commitment to improve the underpass appearance – collaboration and deep diving into BNSF and MDT, with discussion of expanding to a working group for the traffic flow, congestion—see Goal 5) below.
  - c. Informal, voluntary support of dark sky lighting in the community
- 2) Goal: Create a Safe and Resilient community
- a. Ongoing Mt House Fire-wise adaptive community programming, communications and collaboration with DNRC, USFS, GNP, Flathead ES Office, community email updates and PSAs
- 3) Goal: Enhance Community Communications and participation – developing a community-wide email list around Fire Safety communication, updates on fire conditions, PSA during COVID19 restrictions, interactive website questionnaire, discussion and ideas for independent newsletter or seasonal calendar, kiosk.
- 4) Goal: Support sustainable Outdoor Recreation Opportunities – informal working group is emerging around Wild and Scenic and River issues – overcrowded access pick up and parking, trailer speeds, overuse (waste in water and on banks), invasive weeds, overuse in areas with no outlet.
- 5) Goal: Transportation – Continuation of Traffic Study in WG (4<sup>th</sup> year of data collection), renewed interest in issues regarding congestion, parking, speed limits, crosswalks, access to GNP. Discussion of working group starting after the tourist season to begin this collaboration in earnest.
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The plan is important to:

*Locals and Visitors:*

*The Vision Plan identifies community character elements and locations for improvements to community identity and visitor awareness and stewardship.*

*Business and Property Owners:*

The Vision Plan provides direction on the topics of development, policies, programs, natural environment, and services to be planned for with the County and other Flathead Valley communities for a resilient future.

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Please feel free to reply to this email if you have questions.

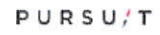
Please reply to this email if you wish to be removed from this email list.

Sincerely, on behalf of the WGVP entire planning team,

Mary T. McClelland  
West Glacier Community Coordinator  
[marytreemcclelland@gmail.com](mailto:marytreemcclelland@gmail.com)

Monica Jungster  
Owner, Montana House  
[1960mthouse@gmail.com](mailto:1960mthouse@gmail.com)

Gary Rogers  
Pursuit Collections  
Glacier National Park  
[grodgers@pursuitcollection.com](mailto:grodgers@pursuitcollection.com)





## Donna Valade

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**From:** Mary Fisher  
**Sent:** Friday, August 6, 2021 11:18 AM  
**To:** Donna Valade  
**Subject:** FW: West Glacier

**From:** Bill Lundgren <billlundgrenwtl@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, August 6, 2021 11:04 AM  
**To:** Planning.Zoning <Planning.Zoning@flathead.mt.gov>  
**Subject:** West Glacier

To the Flathead County Planning Board:

I fully support adoption of the West Glacier Vision Plan. As a lifelong resident and business owner, I believe this measure may help preserve the character of our community.

Respectfully,

Bill Lundgren  
121 Old River Bridge Road  
West Glacier, MT 59936